

## Back to School Luau & Beach Party!!!

**Focus:** Family/Teacher interaction and getting to know everyone to make a stronger school and stronger community.

**Goal:** PTA member exposure and for students to meet their teacher and see their classroom.

**Plan:** Decorate with beach balls, tiki torches, tiki masks, etc. Supply a dinner of grilled hot dogs, chips, and cookie. Ask parents and staff to bring their own lawn chairs and drinks and for the kids to bring their own water guns from home, and a towel with change of clothes. Supply a "Scavenger Hunt" sheet to each student as they first come in and find who their teacher will be for this school year. Then after the scavenger hunt and dinner, let the games begin.

**Activities:** For the first hour, allow the kids to do their scavenger hunt/meet the teacher. Each "Scavenger Hunt" sheet should have a list of rooms/people to meet. Ex: Principal, nurse, secretary, art room, music room, gym, cafeteria, their teacher/classroom, and you can even have them find the nearest bathrooms! At each place or at a few of the essential places, have the students find an object, perhaps a lei or beach ball, etc. Or just have the person they were to find, sign their "Scavenger Hunt" sheet. When they finally find their classroom (which should be last). Have the teacher give them a colored wrist band. All students in each teachers room, should have the same colored wrist band. Ex: Ms. Jane Doe's room all has blue wrist bands, while Mr. John Doe's class has all red wrist bands. You can even make it so all of 1<sup>st</sup> grade has some variation of blue, while 2<sup>nd</sup> grade all have a variation of red. Then you can tell what grade they're in and what class they're in. Once they have their band (their reward for finishing the hunt). The families are to go outside for dinner. One way to boost PTA memberships, is to offer free dinners to the family's that are already members or that will purchase the memberships right then. All non PTA members will have a fee of \$1 or \$2, whatever you decide.

While eating dinner, people will notice others with the same colored band, and will realize that another student is in the same class as their child. It's a great way to get families to mingle with each other.

After dinner you can set up lots of different games such as relay races (fill the bucket), limbo, tug-o-war, hula hoop challenge, beach ball toss, water gun fights and water balloon fights. (You may want to keep a baby pool of water around so kids can refill their guns, and maybe put a sign that says no swimming in it.) One great idea with the beach balls is to write a question or two on them to help kids break the ice with each other. Ex: What's your favorite color? What's your favorite type of food? Each time the student catches it, they have to answer at least one question and pass back for the other student to answer. The more questions the better!

With each game, make the classrooms stick together. Ex: Tug-O-War - Have all the blue on one end, with their teacher and have all the reds on the other end, with their teacher. After they have a go at it, then have all the parents of blue on one end and all the parents of red on the other end. This is a great way of kids and parents getting to know each other and working as a team together.

Note: You may want to make the water fights be last, then everyone can dry off at the end and change clothes before the go home.

### Publicize:

- ★ Tell your local paper, or news. They might want to even cover the story!
- ★ Send fliers home in the back to school packets.
- ★ Put the information on the schools board out front (if you have one).
- ★ Put it on the school and PTA's websites (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- ★ Word of mouth is always a very strong way to get the word out!
- ★ Put up fliers wherever their school supplies are listed, ex: Walmart almost always carries every local school's lists for school supplies.